



UPDATE

Montana Department of Commerce

A Unified Voice for Montana's Tourism and Recreation Future

Dear Friends,

It's hard to believe it has been one year since we began the process to develop our 2003-2007 Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan. This is the third time we've undergone a five-year plan and I believe this process has well surpassed our expectations of private and public citizen involvement. We started last fall with input from approximately 400 individuals through a series of public meetings. With the assistance of our contractor and the lead stakeholders (Tourism Advisory Council, Montana Tourism and Recreation Initiative (MTRI) and Travel Montana) the input from the public meetings was developed into a draft vision statement, with goals and objectives. The next big step was to post the draft plan online for further outreach to the tourism and recreation industry. To facilitate this outreach, over 90 stakeholders, some not traditionally identified with the tourism/recreation industry, were contacted for comment. Each stakeholder was asked to have 10 representatives participate in an online survey. With 60% participation from the stakeholders we prioritized our goals and objectives. This draft document is now located on our intranet site www.travelmontana.state.mt.us for final public comment.

Once the plan receives endorsement from the Tourism Advisory Council at their October meeting and support from MTRI and the various stakeholders the real work will begin; implementation. How we help facilitate the implementation of the Plan is currently being discussed, but we anticipate that regional meetings will be the catalyst to bring all of the stakeholders together to identify and delegate the action plans. New and unique partnerships will need to be formed in order to accomplish our goals. There is power in numbers and it is my hope that these new associations will create a unified voice for our strategic plan and, in the long run, for Montana's tourism and recreation industry. So I ask each of you to invest your time and energy to this important task at hand. It will take all of us, and then some, to nurture and protect this very important industry of Tourism and Recreation for the state of Montana!

Sincerely,

Betsy Baumgart
Administrator, Montana Promotion Division

Did You Know?

- No botox was used for wintermt.com's facelift - just 100% natural talent from our webmaster Thurston Elfstrom. Check it out. It's sure to turn some heads.
- The electronic marketing staff will be mailing out the Summer 2003 Calendar of Events surveys on October 21. The survey form should be returned by mid-November. If you have questions call Jan Wirak at 406-841-2870 or email jan@visitmt.com
- You can receive the monthly update electronically? Simply go to www.travelmontana.state.mt.us to sign up.

Cozy Up to Travel Montana's Winter Advertising Campaign

"The Only Thing Missing is the Wait," is the theme for the new 2003 print and television winter advertising campaign. According to Consumer Marketing Manager, Sarah Lawlor, the goal of this year's message is to stand out from the conventional ski advertisements we are all familiar with. The winter campaign will also incorporate direct mail and the Internet.

Print

Our new creative illustrates a child whose mouth is covered in chocolate, eyeing her candy bar with the words "sharing is overrated," superimposed



on the photo. Below the picture is a smaller shot of a skier with the text: "Especially when it comes to unbelievable terrain, incredible snow, uncrowded slopes and spectacular scenery, Ski Montana - the only thing missing is the wait."

The ad is being placed in 15 publications with a renewed emphasis on ski-specific publications such as *Ski*, *Skiing*, and new to the plan, *Powder Magazine*. "We received feedback from our larger destination ski areas that believed we should as they say, fish where the fish are," said Lawlor. "In turn we decided to increase our exposure in the traditional ski magazines that have a proven audience of readers interested in ski vacation visitors."

The creative will also appear in mainstream outdoor and lifestyle publications

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such as, *Outside*, *National Geographic Traveler* and *Sunset*.

TV

"The Express," our new television commercial, incorporates humor to emphasize Montana's appeal as an uncrowded ski destination with short lift lines. The :30 and :60 second spots will run in a pay-per-inquiry campaign.

Direct Mail

Travel Montana will embark on a new national direct mail campaign. The piece will target 500,000 ski enthusiasts throughout the United States. In addition to the ski enthusiast campaign, we'll distribute a mailing to 500,000 upscale, active vacation travelers in October and April. Subsequently, the Montana message will reach up to 1.5 million households of highly targeted vacation travelers.

In-State Ski Campaign

Travel Montana will publicize the EZ Ski/EZ Ride program for a second year. The popular learn-to-ski package, coordinated by the Montana Ski Areas Association, will be marketed through our skimt.com website.

Internet

Our winter web presence will reflect more exposure on various search engines and an increased presence on ski and outdoor sites.

Snowmobile

This year marks the fifth season of the sledtherockies.org cooperative partnership with the states of Idaho and Wyoming. The sledtherockies.org website will be getting a facelift and the partners are giving away a snowmobile through an online sweepstakes. The sweepstakes is an effective vehicle to develop a database of snowmobilers interested in our tri-state area.

Excellent Work!

The Travel Montana Electronic Marketing Team was selected as the Department of Commerce's Governor's Award of Excellence in Performance 2002 recipient. Governor Judy Martz recognized the team of Corrie Hahn, Thurston Elfstrom, Brian Pierce, Dan Bethke, Jan Wirak and Deb Knudson at an awards ceremony on September 17. The Electronic Marketing Team is responsible for the development of the division's eight websites. The sites hosted 2.7 million visitors in 2001.

The Department of Commerce also recognized Travel Montana staff members Pam Gosink and Brian Pierce for their efforts in coordinating the Department of Commerce move and Maribeth Goodrich for her outstanding contributions to the Montana Film Office. Congratulations to all of you for dedication to the Department and the people of Montana.

Show Me the Money

The Montana Film Office worked on two feature films this summer, *Heaven's Pond* and *Hidalgo*. Montana Film Office Manager, Sten Iversen, estimates that *Heaven's Pond*, shot on Horseshoe Lake outside of Libby, contributed between \$750,000 to \$1 million to the Libby economy. The Film Office would like to thank Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks for their cooperative efforts to temporarily close Horseshoe Lake during filming.

Hidalgo, a big budget feature film produced by Disney shot a scene involving 500 horses on the Blackfeet Reservation. While there were only 4 filming days, the prep and

wrap time lasted almost 2 months. Iversen estimates the economic impact of the film in Glacier County is approximately \$500,000.

Comings and Goings

The Montana Promotion Division welcomes Amy Robbins to our team. Amy is the Administrative Assistant to Montana Promotion Division Administrator, Betsy Baumgart. While the Division gained one new team member, we have lost two of our staff to the University of Montana. Travel Montana Industry Programs Specialist, Megan Morris is studying law and Montana Film Office Location Assistant, Michelle Much is studying nursing. Although the entire staff may not wish the best for the Grizzlies this year, we won't hold any grudges against Michelle and Megan. Good luck to all in your new endeavors.

Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided to disabled persons on request.

Calendar of Events

October

- 8-10 Cultural Tourism Corridor Workshop – Fort Benton
- 24-25 Cultural Tourism Corridor Workshop – Missoula

November

- 7-13 National Tour Association Convention – Los Angeles

For all of the latest Montana tourism industry information log on to:
travelmontana.state.mt.us.



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Montana Department of Commerce

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